

NEWS RELEASE

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DeNUCCI SAYS SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES RAISE \$20 MILLION FOR VARIOUS FUNDS

State Auditor Joe DeNucci said today that the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) Special License Plates Program, which has generated close to \$20 million since it began in 1995, is working well. DeNucci's audit found that fees generated from the sale of seven special plates were spent appropriately and for the purposes intended.

DeNucci's audit of the special plate program focused on the entities and funds receiving fees from the sale of these seven plates in fiscal year 2002, and then determined if the money was spent for the intended purposes. They were: Environmental Trust Fund (*Right Whale Plate, Fish and Wildlife Plate, and Blackstone Valley Plate*), Child Care Quality Fund (*Invest in Children Plate*), Massachusetts United States Olympic Fund (*United States Olympic Plate*), Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket County Commissioners, (*Cape Cod and Islands Plate*), Chelsea Soldiers Home/Holyoke Soldiers Home (*Veteran Plate*).

"Special Massachusetts license plates provide financial assistance to several worthwhile causes, including non-profit organizations, community associations, civic groups, schools, cities and towns, regional planning agencies, and special projects," said DeNucci. "The program deserves the public's support."

Statistics compiled by DeNucci found that there are 140,902 active plates on the road today:

Right Whale Plate	54,196
Fish and Wildlife Plate	4,710
Blackstone Valley Plate	2,178
Invest in Children Plate	14,099
United States Olympic Plate	1,764
Cape Cod and Islands Plate	48,374
Veterans Plate	<u>15,581</u>
	<u>140,902</u>

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DeNucci's report also tabulated the total revenue for all the funds and entities from fiscal years 1995 through 2002:

Environmental Trust	FY 2002	TOTAL
Right Whale	\$1,039,404	\$9,394,308
Fish and Wildlife	\$80,964	\$237,448
Blackstone Valley	\$40,516	\$98,764
Veteran	\$317,320	\$2,386,435
Cape Cod & Islands	\$1,238,145	\$6,248,920
United States Olympic	\$43,308	\$261,330
Invest in Children	\$281,664	\$909,905
	\$3,041,321	\$19,537,110

According to DeNucci's report, money generated from sale of the plates is earmarked for the following purposes:

- **Environmental Trust Fund** – managed by a board of trustees appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs, the trusts mission is to fund and coordinate projects that encourage cooperative efforts to raise environmental awareness and support innovative approaches that can protect and restore our natural resources.
- **Child Care Quality Fund** – administered by the Office for Child Care Services, the funds should be disbursed by providing grants to not-for-profit organizations for the purpose of improving child care services.
- **Massachusetts United States Olympic Fund** – authorized by Massachusetts General Laws to assist state residents in paying for costs associated with the operation of the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams.
- **Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket County Commissions** – revenues to be expended for the economic development of Cape Cod and the Islands.
- **Chelsea Soldiers' Home / Holyoke Soldiers Home** – funds used to benefit the residents of the homes

DeNucci noted that three additional special plates have been recently authorized – a “United We Stand” plate, with proceeds going to the victims of the September 11, 2001 tragedy; a Boston Red Sox plate, with proceeds directed to the Jimmy Fund; and a Boston Bruins plate, with proceeds going to Massachusetts youth hockey.